

Views and Reviews in the World of Art

(Continued from preceding page.)

cieties, small cliques and some misguided critics. Great works are only accomplished by free expression. As soon as cursed by unjust criticism, a change sets in—sometimes for the better, through madness to conquer, but more often for the worse, being discouraged. Only men of iron and indomitable faith in their own convictions will stand the test.

"It seems deplorable though that it was thought necessary in Barnard's case to show so much animosity—even if it were an inferior work. This situation has never arisen before, to my knowledge, in this country. Why so much haste to condemn—so much venom? The sad part is that these attacks have misled the public before it had a chance to judge the bronze itself, and have brought forth numerous pitiful letters airing their knowledge (?) on art, and exposing misplaced ridicule about this great work.

"How can any one with a conscience—even a great enemy—stand before this calm and dignified Lincoln and not be thrilled? How can any one have the temerity to criticize this statue in the language that has been used? How could one fail to be impressed by the devoted sincerity of the man who wrought this work, and not to have enough respect at

prejudice that has tried to prevent their taking the place they deserve in the world of art. To mention a few: Puvion de Chavannes, Whistler, Carpeaux, Rude, Manet—Bizet's "Carmen" was hissed off the stage—Wagner, Chopin, Edgar Allan Poe and numerous others. After all is said and done, criticism of the morbid, insidious kind is almost impossible to check, it being at the basis not sincere and having in its fabric nothing tangible to improve. It seems to me to have its being in the cowardly weakness of those not in the profession, and springs from malice, not from ignorance as we are wont to believe.

Art should be free and should have full power to create. It is hard enough under the most favorable circumstances to achieve the slightest advance. Why retard it officially and journalistically by such intrigue and injustice as have marked the Barnard case?

Plan Prix de New York for French Writers

Miss Janet Scudder, the well known sculptress, has given most of her energies, since her recent return from France, to work that is intended to still further

themselves into all our industries. No branch of commercialism has escaped them, and also they had obtained almost complete control of the musical world in New York and other cities. This could not have been done without their knowledge of English.

"The Frenchman will never follow in the footsteps of the German, because he prefers to live in his own country; no amount of allurements or success could persuade him to give up his beloved France permanently. But, on the other hand, a knowledge of English would be of tremendous benefit to him and to us if he had that knowledge. Think of what it would have meant if Joffre could have talked to us!

"At the present most difficult moment in the history of France very few of the men she is sending to England and the United States on missions speak the English language.

"With thousands of American soldiers in France there is now an opportunity for the French to talk our language. But there are no books from which to study it. The supply of French and English dictionaries and grammars in Paris was exhausted two years ago and owing to the scarcity of paper and printers no more are being published.

"Our first practical effort in the work



"Shepherdess," by Horatio Walker. In the Dr. Sanden collection at the John Levy Galleries.

least to be silent if one had not the courage to say a just word.

It is a dangerous thing for some wilful people to have too much license to say anything they please about a work of art—good, bad, or indifferent. People will say everybody has a right to their opinion. It seems mostly so in art, literature and music. A few printed words of malicious criticism will often ruin a man's reputation and cripple him financially for life. How long would this be tolerated in the business world without libel suits? An artist has no legal redress and consequently enemies have the privilege of ruining him under the disguise of an honest opinion.

To come back to cause of stagnation, I believe it has been brought about gradually and unconsciously by the art institutions throughout the country adopting the methods of labor unions. This is sufficient to restrain progress in anything. It kills ambition. No matter how efficient you are at your trade, you get the same wage; and if you leave the union to better yourself you will starve. Of course, this is not exactly the same process in the higher institutions of art, but it is very similar. Unless a man is a member of them or meets with their favor, it is almost impossible to get a hearing or a chance to show one's work except when one is independently wealthy. This state of affairs exists only when the ones in control abuse their position and become arrogant by too much authority. This autocracy retards art's expression far more than any kind of criticism in favor or against a work; constructive, though adverse, criticism will create some interest in an artist's work and is far better than not being seen at all.

Most all great men in art, literature and music have been persecuted by a

cement the friendship between this country and France after the war. The society "Pour les Ecrivains Français," of which Mrs. Newbold Leroy Edgar is the president and Miss Scudder the secretary, hopes to bring this about by persuading the French to study English and ultimately to establish a prix de New York for young French writers of talent. In conversation the other day Miss Scudder made the following argument:

"It is no longer a question of protecting the fine arts of France because the artists are busy protecting their country. The able bodied men are in the trenches; the less able bodied men are doing civilian work for the war.

"There are many hours in a soldier's day during which he has time free to work out his natural bent; also there are many long hours while he is convalescing in the hospital during which he can carry on his studies.

"The demand for books is enormous—a fact that can be proved by the lists sent from the hospitals and trenches—books that men have asked for. It is of interest to note that these lists are made up almost entirely of books that only students or scholars would call for. It is not our purpose to furnish these books; there are one or two committees in Paris which attend to that.

"Our purpose is to send the men books which will make it possible for them to study the English language. The French have never realized the importance of speaking other languages than their own. The Germans have, and therein lay their prosperity. It is said that already Russian is being taught in the public schools of Germany, so that the Germans may be prepared to do in Russia what they have done in Austria. They have rushed

we have undertaken will be to send large supplies of pocket editions of grammars and dictionaries to the soldiers—particularly to the soldiers convalescing in the hospitals, also a text book will be sent in English and French—a study book one side of page English, the other French, which will contain messages to the French soldiers from America, and information about the war conditions here that will further inspire the soldiers of France to continue their great fight for civilization.

"When we have done this we intend later to establish prizes for the best short stories and essays written in English by the French. After that we hope to establish a Prix des Etats Unis which will permit the winner of the prize to travel and study in our country."

The committee, of which Mrs. Charles B. Alexander, Mrs. Robert Bacon, Mrs. Francis Pendleton and Mrs. Charles Marshall are other members, intends to earn the money for the necessary fund in various practical ways. The first enterprise arranged for is a concert at the Princess Theatre on Sunday, February 17, by Mme.

(Continued on following page.)

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(Being to the changed and peculiar conditions brought about by the entrance of the United States into the world war there has arisen a desire on the part of many Americans of late who have gained in fortune and have a taste for or love of art, and of others who wisely consider superior art works as good investments—to acquire the same—and at the same time there has come to many others, through increased cost of living and falling fortunes, the desire or necessity of disposing of their art possessions.

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